

General Course Information:

SOSC P8773.001 SOC HIST OF AMER PUBLIC HEALT
W 09:00A-10:50A
RTBA

Instructor Information:

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Course Objectives

The purpose of this course is to provide students with a historical understanding of the role public health has played in American history during the 19th and 20th centuries. The underlying assumptions are that disease, and the ways we define disease, are simultaneously reflections of social and cultural values, as well as important factors in shaping those values. Also, it is maintained that the environments that we build determine the ways we live and die. The dread infectious and acute diseases in the nineteenth century, the chronic, degenerative conditions of the twentieth and the new, vaguely understood conditions rooted in a changing chemical and human-made environment are emblematic of the societies we created. The syllabus has been constructed to focus on a few particular themes and issues. The first part of the course will focus on the changing demographic of Colonial and Early Republic America and the creation of the social and biological conditions necessary for the arrival of the nineteenth century epidemics of cholera, typhoid, yellow fever among others.

The second part of the course will trace the changing urban and industrial infrastructure and their relationship to late nineteenth and early twentieth century concerns about tuberculosis, industrial illness and chronic disease. The third part of the course will trace public health practice, and public health campaigns, and the ways that social attitudes towards the industrial worker, the immigrant, African Americans, women and gays shaped the field. The last part of the course will look at the boundaries between public health and medical practice and raise questions about their shifting definitions. As topics indicate, the course will emphasize that public health is intimately related to broader social, political, as well as scientific, changes overtaking the country and will incorporate a very broad range of subjects from changes in urban living and culture, through the transformation of the industrial work place.

Among the questions that will be addressed are: How does the health status of Americans reflect and shape our history? How do ideas about health reflect broader attitudes and values in American history and culture? How does the American experience with pain, disability and disease affect our actions and lives? What are the responsibilities of the state and of the individual in preserving health? How have American institutions -- from hospitals to unions to insurance companies -- been shaped by changing longevity, experience with disability and death? These questions are central to this class. By focusing on recent works on the interaction of health, politics, and ideas about gender, race, and class, the course will look at the ways social values are shaped by, and help shape, definitions of disease, ideas about prevention, and social responsibility for care for those made dependent by illness.

Course Requirements

Requirements for the Course include reading and class participation, a research paper (due at the end of the semester) and a class presentation. The research paper must be based upon original, primary documents, manuscript collections and other historical sources. Students will meet with the instructor and report to the class on the progress of their research at various points in the semester.

Syllabus - Week to Week

Defining the People's Health

1. Introduction-- A Brief Historiography
Peter Novick, That Noble Dream, pp. 415-468.
Rosner, "Tempest in a Test Tube: Medical History and the Historian," Radical History Review, (1982), pp.166-171.
Reverby and Rosner, "Beyond the Great Doctors Revisited," in Huisman and Warner, eds., Locating Medical History, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004).
Primary Sources: Lloyd Stevenson to David Rosner, (1973).
2. The People's Health in the Colonial Period
Philip Greven, Four Generations: Population, Land, and Family in Colonial Andover, Massachusetts, (1978), pp. 21-40.
John Demos, "Notes on Life in Plymouth Colony," William & Mary Quarterly, 22(1965), 69-91.
Carville V. Earle, "Environment, Disease, and Mortality in Early Virginia," in Tate and Ammerman, eds. The Chesapeake in the Seventeenth Century : Essays on Anglo-American Society , pp. 96-125
E. Morgan, American Slavery, American Freedom, 158-171.
David Jones, "Virgin Soils Revisited," William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd Series, 40(October, 2003)
pp. 703-742.
David Rothman, The Discovery of the Asylum, Chs. 1-4.
3. Nineteenth Century Epidemics
Charles Rosenberg, The Cholera Years, (Chicago)
Rosner, Hives of Sickness, Epidemics and Public Health in New York City:
 1. "Introduction" pp.1-21
 2. Chapter 2 by Betsy Blackmar, pp.42-64.
 3. Condran, "Changing Patterns of Epidemic Disease in New York City," pp.27-41.Primary Documents:
Selections from the Cholera Bulletin (1832)
Metropolitan Board of Health, Report on the Sanitary Conditions of the City, 1865, pp. 73- 84. [See Web Site (www.tlcarhive.org) for Additional District Reports]
4. Immigration, Isolation and 19th Century Epidemics
Nancy Tomes, The Gospel of Germs
Howard Markel, Quarantine!
5. The Public Health Response during the Progressive Era
Judith Leavitt, Typhoid Mary, (Beacon)
Primary documents:
Annual Report of the Department of Health, City of New York, 1910-1911
pp. 11-17;33;40-49. [also available on Web site]
"Sickness," in Robert Hunter, Poverty: Social Conscience in the Progressive Era, (1904), pp. 141-189.

6. Discussion of Research Topics

The Borders of Personal and Public Health

7. Medicine, Public Health, and the Establishment of the Modern Institutions of Medicine

E. Richard Brown, Rockefeller Medicine Men, 1978, pp.60-97.

Primary Materials: Abraham Flexner, Medical Education in the United States and Canada (Carnegie Foundation Bulletin #4), pp. 42-59; 143-155;178-179;180-181.42-159.

Primary Materials:

J. Marion Sims, The Story of My Life, (1984), pp. 222-246.

8. Private Services and Public Health: The Transformation of the Hospital
read one of the following:

Charles Rosenberg, The Social Transformation of the American Hospital

Rosemary Stevens, In Sickness and in Wealth

David Rosner, A Once Charitable Enterprise

Morris Vogel, The Invention of the Modern Hospital

Primary Documents: Various Annual Reports from 19th and 20th Century Institutions

The Emergence and Re-Emergence of Industrial and Environmental Disease

9. Industrialism and Public Health

Rosner and Markowitz, Deadly Dust, (Michigan)

Markowitz and Rosner, Deceit and Denial, Chs. 1-4.

10. Environment and Disease

One of the following:

John Harr, A Civil Action

Rachel Carson, Silent Spring

Race, Gender and The Boundaries of Public Health

11. Public Health Research, Race and Gender

Keith Wailoo, Drawing Blood or Dying in the City of the Blues

M.F. Jacobson, Whiteness of a Different Color, (1998), pp.1-90.

Various readings on the Bell Curve debate:

R.C. Lewontin and Leon Kamin, "IQ: The Rank Ordering of the World,"

In Harding, The Racial Economy of Science, (1993), pp. 110.

12. AIDS, SARS and the Re-Imagining of Infectious Disease

Shilts -- And The Band Played On

13. Public Health After 9/11

either:

David Rosner and Gerald Markowitz, Are We Ready? or

Irwin Redlener, Americans at Risk

14. Bringing it All Back Home -- The Disease Experience in America

Richard Harris, A Sacred Trust, The Story of Organized Medicine's Multi-

Million Dollar Fight Against Public Health Legislation, (1966) pp. 1-19.

Health PAC - The American Health Empire: Power, Profits, and Politics,
(1970), pp. 3-28.
Victor Fuchs, Who Shall Live?, (1974), pp. 31-55.
Ivan Ilych, Medical Nemesis, (1976) 3-36.
John McKinley and Sonja McKinley, "The Questionable Contribution of
Medical Measures to the Decline of Mortality in the United States in the
Twentieth Century," MMFQ/Health & Society, 55(1977), 405-428.

Books Ordered

David Rosner, Ed. Hives of Sickness: Epidemics and Public Health in New York City,
(Rutgers)
Charles Rosenberg, The Cholera Years
Howard Markel, Quarantine!
Judith Leavitt, Typhoid Mary
Allan Brandt, Cigarette Century
Stephan Jay Gould, The Mismeasure of Man
David Rosner & Gerald Markowitz, Deadly Dust
Gerald Markowitz and David Rosner, Deceit and Denial
Jonathan Harr, A Civil Action
Keith Wailoo, Drawing Blood
David Rosner and Gerald Markowitz, Are We Ready? Public Health Since 9/11
Nancy Tomes, The Gospel of Germs